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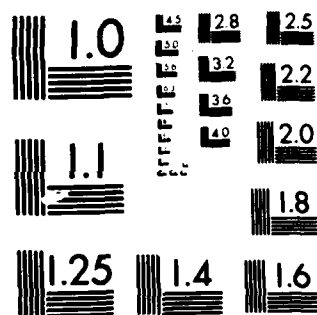   PSYCHOLOGY   M VILLAREAL ET AL. NOV 83 TR-ONR-28
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Hispanics, Mainstream, preference for supervisors

20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

Samples of Hispanic and Mainstream recruits responded to a questionnaire
which presented 64 supervisors and asked for an estimate of the degree of lik-
ing and the probable productivity of workers working under each supervisor.
There were no systematic differences between the Hispanics and the Mainstream.
Both samples indicated a preference for structured (he tells you exactly what
to do...) open (you know exactly what he thinks about you) and considerate
(when you don't feel well he assigns you an easy job) supervisors.

Navy Recruits' Expectations of Productivity, Liking,

and Intentions to Quit under Different Supervisors

Marcelo Villareal and Harry C. Triandis

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Social interaction seems to be determined by mutual attributions and
expectations held by the participants of the interaction about each other
(e.g. McCall & Simmons, 1978; Triandis, 1977a, 1977b, 1981), as well as by
the behavioral and social alternatives of the participants (e.g. Putallaz
& Gottman, 1981; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

Diverse researchers have studied the effects of attributions and
expectations on supervisory and leadership styles as well as the effects of
these styles on the perceptions, behavior, and productivity of group members
(e.g., Bales, 1950; Cartwright & Zander, 1968; Hollander, 1978). Of partic-
ular interest, along these lines, have been the effects of emphasis on
productivity as opposed to emphasis on the personal well-being of the workers
(e.g., Bales, 1950; Fiedler, 1967). More specifically, two factors have
been identified to be of major relevance for effective leadership and super-
vision: Consideration for the workers and initiation of structure by the
supervisor (Hemphill, 1955; Katz & Kahn, 1978). Whether a supervisor pro-
vides workers with information about the work environment has also been
observed to affect the workers' satisfaction with and efficiency in their
jobs (e.g., Katz & Kahn, 1978; Laird & Laird, 1975 edition).

In this study we assessed the relevance of these supervisory styles for
the perception of high productivity and quitting intentions, as well as for
the expressed liking for the supervisor, among Hispanic and Mainstream Navy
recruits. In addition, we examined the effects of the supervisor's personal
characteristics, such as his age, race, or ethnic background, on these per-
ceptions.

Subjects

Two samples of male Navy recruits separately responded to two questionnaires as part of a larger study of their perceptions of the social environment. One of these samples was formed by 19 Mainstream (see description below) and 20 Hispanic participants, while 40 Mainstream and 40 Hispanic recruits constituted the second sample. These samples were formed at different times following the procedure to be described next. In each of three Navy Recruit Stations, when a recruit with a Spanish surname was to be classified the classification officer checked the recruit's self-identification on an application form on which "Hispanic" was one of the ways in which the applicant could identify himself. A Spanish-surnamed recruit who identified himself as Hispanic was asked to complete the aforementioned questionnaires. At the same time, another recruit was randomly selected and given the same questionnaire. The recruits in the latter group constitute the "Mainstream" sample.

The contrast between the Hispanics and Mainstream was of special interest, since if there is a contrast between a common set of cultural elements across diverse American groups (differing in race and region) with U.S. Hispanic culture, it would be useful to extract it for Hispanic recruitment, training, and retention programs, both in the Navy and in U.S. industry.

Procedure

Two questionnaires presented 64 stimulus persons. They described male supervisors who varied along four dimensions: age (25- or 45-years old), race (white or black), ethnicity (Anglo or Hispanic), and supervisory style. The supervisor's style was: (1) Either open (described as "He tells you more than you want to know about what is going on on the job. You know exactly what he thinks about you") or closed ("You don't know

what he thinks about you; he tells you nothing about what goes on on the job");

(2) either laissez-faire ("He never tells you what to do, and sets no deadlines

for your work; he does not check to see whether you complete your assignments")

or structured ("He tells you exactly what to do and sets specific deadlines for

when it should be done. He makes sure you carry out your assignments exactly

as expected"); (3) either considerate ("When you don't feel well, he assigns

you an easy job. One time your brother was sick in the hospital and he let you

take leave and visit him") or inconsiderate ("In assigning jobs to you, it

makes no difference to him whether you feel well or not. One time your brothe

was sick in the hospital and he did not give you leave and insisted that you

stay on the job"); or (4) either intimate ("He reveals you his intimate

feelings about the way he feels about the commanding officer; he talks to you

openly about his sex life") or formal ("He tells you nothing about his intimate

feelings concerning others; he keeps his sex life completely secret from you").

This results in a 2^4 within-subjects design (age, sex, ethnicity and behavior)

for each of four behavioral dimensions, plus a between subjects ethnicity

factor. Thus a total of 4x16=64 different supervisors were used.

Each participant was asked to rate how much they would like each of these

64 supervisors, and to indicate how likely it would be that, given a particular

supervisor and behavior, they would "work faster and produce more", "quit",

"work more carefully and increase the quality of your work", and that "pro-

ductivity (output/hour) would increase in America".

One of the samples answered this questionnaire using a 5-point scale,

whereas a second sample responded on a 10-point scale for a methodological

study reported elsewhere. In both cases, the lowest category was "never" and

the highest was "always" and "for sure". Corresponding middle points in the

scales (C, and 5 or 6, respectively) indicated that the participant was

undecided about the likelihood of an event given a particular supervisor.

A principal axes factor analysis with varimax rotation was then

performed on the sums of the five categories of events, for each of the two versions of the questionnaires. Results from these analyses suggested that the best grouping of the scales was in three clusters: (1) productivity expectations (work faster and produce more, work more carefully and increase the quality of the work, productivity in America would increase); (2) expected quitting intentions; and (3) expected liking. This permitted three repeated-measures split-plot 5-way ANOVAs, with one between subjects and four within subject factors. Whenever a cell score in a 2x2x2x2x2 matrix was missing for a participant, all of his scores were dropped from the analysis.

Results

Results for the analyses of variance showed consistent and very strong main effects for supervisory styles. These effects were inconsistently moderated but rarely over-iden by higher-order interaction effects. Given these considerations, we will limit our discussion to consistent main effects. Before detailing our results we would like, however, to highlight the fact that, given the nature of our research design, it was possible to ascertain that the results to be reported apply to both Mainstream and Hispanic Navy recruits.

Both samples (5 point and 10 point scales) reported higher expectations and intentions of productivity when the supervisor was structured [$F(1,34)$= 31.56, p=.0000, and $F(1,54)$= 86.1776, p= .0000], open [$F(1,36)$= 4.16, p= .0487, and $F(1,55)$= 40.79, p= .0000], and considerate [$F(1,33)$= 47.23, p= .0000; $F(1,57)$= 109.83, p= .0000], than when he was laissez-faire, closed, and inconsiderate.

Regarding quitting intentions, the participants of both samples indicated higher intentions to quit whenever the supervisor was laissez-faire [$F(1,32)$= 5.67, p= .0233; $F(1,61)$= 22.86, p= .0000] or inconsiderate [$F(1,35)$= 16.43,

$p=$ .0002; $F(1,60)=$ 36.08, $p=$ .0000]. However, the results for the other supervisory styles were more complex.

Results for liking scores show patterns similar to those for productivity. Both samples indicated that they would like structured [$F(1,34)=$ 9.17, $p=$ .0046; $F(1,59)=$ 47.51, $p=$ .0000], open [$F(1,35)=$ 4.24, $p=$ .0470; $F(1,58)=$ 57.1632, $p=$ .0000], or considerate supervisors [$F(1,34)=$ 41.90; $F(1,64)=$ 187.73, $p=$ .0000] better than laissez-faire, closed, or inconsiderate supervisors.

Discussion

Our results suggest that a supervisor's behavior is of paramount importance in influencing workers' perceptions of him and their intention to produce and quit. If this is the case, training programs in leadership and social skills, as well as simple recommendations to supervisors regarding "appropriate" supervisory behaviors may prove a fruitful avenue to increase workers' satisfaction and productivity, and to reduce turnover.

On the other hand, it is theoretically appealing to assume that liking for a supervisor affects productivity and quitting intentions, but our results do not indicate an unqualified support for this hypothesis. The fact that liking results seem to parallel those for expectations of productivity, however, call our attention to the possibility that quitting intentions may be highly influenced by the availability of alternatives (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and that dislike for a supervisor might be better reflected by a drop in productivity (psychological withdrawal) than by quitting (e.g., Hom & Hulin, 1978; March & Simon, 1958; Miller, 1981). Further research in this area, however, is clearly necessary.

The Hispanic/Mainstream contrast, in this study, did not reveal any important differences. While on several other studies with the same sampling design (Technical Reports ONR-13, ONR-14, ONR-15, ONR-19, and ONR-24) there were important cultural differences, the present study did not identify any.

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